



## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## **PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

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All data are the most recent year available.

### **DISTRICT**

1. Number of schools in the district 132 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
38 Middle/Junior high schools  
26 High schools  
6 K-12 schools  
202 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 13453

### **SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)**

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

<b>Grade</b>	<b># of Males</b>	<b># of Females</b>	<b>Grade Total</b>
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	0	0	0
<b>1</b>	0	0	0
<b>2</b>	0	0	0
<b>3</b>	0	0	0
<b>4</b>	0	0	0
<b>5</b>	0	0	0
<b>6</b>	197	190	387
<b>7</b>	182	183	365
<b>8</b>	190	197	387
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>			<b>1139</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
37 % Asian  
6 % Black or African American  
7 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
46 % White  
4 % Two or more races  
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 4%  
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	29
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	13
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	42
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	1131
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 3%  
Total number of ELL students in the school: 37  
Number of non-English languages represented: 16  
Specify non-English languages:

Chinese, Japanese, Korean, French, Spanish, Greek, Farsi, Amharic, Turkish, Dutch, Polish, Oriya, German, Sinhalese, Tamil, and Marathi.

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6%  
 Total number of students who qualify: 70

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

The total number indicated is the number of students we have participating in the free/reduced priced meal program. All students are eligible to apply, but only those who meet the criteria are approved to participate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 7%  
 Total number of students served: 72

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>6</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>17</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>36</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>12</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>40</u>	<u>4</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>29</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>21</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>96</u>	<u>14</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

16:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>
Daily student attendance	95%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size:	_____	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____	0%
Enrolled in a community college	_____	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____	0%
Found employment	_____	0%
Military service	_____	0%
Other	_____	0%
<b>Total</b>	_____	<b>0%</b>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

## PART III - SUMMARY

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“Welcome to Excellence.” These words greet over 1140 promising students, a dedicated staff, and a supportive parent community to Robert Frost Middle School. Hence, our vision is “Experience Excellence.” *Bethesda Magazine* recognized us as one of the best schools in the county. Gallup honored us as a Gallup High Hope School, one of 192 out of 1700 schools across the nation. Home of the Eagles, we are located north of the nation’s capital in Rockville, Maryland.

We want our diverse students (46% White, 37% Asian, 7% Hispanic, 6% African American, 4% multiple races, 3% English Language Learners, 6% free and reduced meals, and 7% special education) to experience excellence, every day, in every classroom. A typical day of excellence begins with student-led morning announcements via the public address system and TV production class. Students share *Words of Wisdom* to help build our character. They engage in rigorous courses which prepare them for high school and beyond. Frost students obtained proficient or advanced MSA scores of 94.5% in math and 97.4% in reading. We receive top honors in events such as Math Counts, National Science Bowl, Final Frontiers, and Festivals of Music (performing in the US and Canada). Seventy-seven percent of our seventh and eighth grade students take at least one high school level course in math, English, world languages, or computer applications.

Our students develop social/emotional skills needed for a global society. Students engage in SOAR (Student Opportunities for Achievement and Relationship-building) to foster relationships with staff and peers, participate in structured physical activities, and receive additional academic support. Now Reading (20 minutes of silent reading, twice per week promoting life-long readers and learners), Now Walking (leisurely walk after lunch promoting healthy living), Lunch on the Lawn (lunch held outside promoting an appreciation for the environment), and small group counseling provide more opportunities to develop solid social/emotional skills. Also, our eighth graders engage in Super Team (on-going weekly articulation processes) activities to prepare for a smooth transition to high school. Additionally, students participate in over 20 extra-curricular activities including kids yoga, Oxfam club (international organization that addresses poverty and social issues), organic garden club, knitting club, newspaper club, fitness club, games club, public speaking club, intramurals/sports, book club, music, Wootton tutoring (high school students tutoring middle school students), LYLAS (Leading Young Ladies Achieving Success – girls mentoring program), TCB (Taking Care of Business – boys mentoring program), and recycling club.

Since 2009, students have had the unique opportunity to partner with Beijing No. 5 Middle School in Beijing, China. We visit each other’s school, and learn about each other’s culture. Friendships have developed and we continue to grow our partnership. Recently, we held a dynamic model United Nations program.

Opening in 1971, the traditions at Frost Middle School encompass the entire school community. The Dessert Theatre and Talent Show allow hundreds of students to showcase their talent. The annual Turkey Trot is a fun event whereby students and staff participate in a 1.5 mile run and collect money and food to support the City of Rockville’s holiday drive. Students display their achievement in academics and the Arts at our Academic Arts Fair. Our student-staff basketball game provides friendly competition while raising funds for a charitable cause.

Partnerships with parents and community enable us to create a dynamic and enriched learning environment. Our PTA sponsors such events as The Day of Giving, book fair, Differently-abled Fair (physically challenged adults interactively sharing their trials and triumphs), Reflections (performing, visual, and fine arts competition), Frost Fun Nights (students dance, make friends, and enjoy being a middle school student), Box Tops for Education, staff appreciation, sunshine club (welcomes and

supports new families), and fundraisers to support school events. Recently, 95% of our parents indicated a high approval rating and contributed over 2000 volunteer hours. Also, we partner with community members (Silver Diner Restaurant, Laurel International, Lions Club, etc.) to enrich the Frost experience.

The heart of our school that meets the needs of the student body is our dedicated staff. The team of 110 staff members is guided by three core values: 1) Every person is valued and respected, 2) A safe nurturing environment is essential to learning, and 3) Success is everyone's responsibility. The interdisciplinary team (two per grade level) model is the standard for organization. Each team shares a designated group of students and has a common planning time which allows for collaboration and collective inquiry. Nearly 100 percent of the teachers are highly qualified with 9% obtaining National Board Certification. Staff members are called upon to share their expertise with others in the district. The administration has trained over 10 educational leaders who now serve as principals and assistant principals throughout the district. Finally, we believe we have some of the best students on the planet and that's what we give, our best!

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

Robert Frost Middle school is among the highest performing schools in the Montgomery County, Maryland school district. During the past five years, we have demonstrated consistent and high performance on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA) in both mathematics and reading. The MSA is a criterion-referenced test that assesses individual students' reading and math achievement. Students' scores are categorized as basic, proficient, or advanced.

The 2012 school year brought to the school a new data point, the *School Progress Index* (SPI), a component of Maryland's new accountability system. This was established when the state received a waiver from the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The SPI uses a formula, based mostly on state test scores, to determine how schools are progressing toward academic targets. The SPI is determined by three areas, achievement (results of all students on the state assessment in mathematics, reading and science), student growth (the change in student performance for the "all students" group between the current year and prior year), and gap reduction (decrease in the performance gap between the highest and lowest performing subgroups). Robert Frost Middle School is proud of our SPI score of 1.114485, one of the highest in the state.

For the past five years, at least 95% of the students scored proficient in reading. Likewise, we have seen a steady increase in the percentage of students scoring proficient on the MSA in mathematics from 93.7% to 94.6%. This is notable not only for the high scores but also for the consistency in these scores. Additional reading and math support is provided for students not yet achieving at a high level.

Several factors contribute to our high student achievement. Namely, we have created an atmosphere where it is okay and expected to be smart. We communicate four key messages: 1) This is important, 2) You can do it, 3) I will not give up on you, and 4) Effective effort leads to achievement. We believe that students can get smart! We also believe that students are "at promise" versus "at risk." These beliefs are reflected in our implementation of a robust curriculum. Critical thinking, equitable practices, and student engagement are key components of our effective teaching. Teachers collaborate continuously to determine effective strategies for delivery of the curriculum to meet diverse learning modalities. Another key factor to the high achievement of our students is the multiple opportunities for mastering the learning objectives. If students do not "get it" the first time, re-teaching and re-assessment is available. Our beliefs in action, about student achievement enable our students to soar.

The scores on the state assessment do not reveal the full story of our remarkable achievement. Robert Frost Middle School also has many students taking the High School State Assessment in the area of algebra. From 2008 to 2012, we have had a 33% gain in the number of students taking the Algebra HSA with a passing rate consistently and impressively between 99-100% of the total students taking the exam. Over 85.1% of the students complete algebra by 8<sup>th</sup> grade, exceeding the county benchmark.

The data reveals areas of focus for Robert Frost Middle School in the subgroups of free and reduced meals (FARMS) and African Americans in mathematics and reading as well as special education in mathematics. Therefore, comprehensive interventions have been developed to support the specific learning needs for these students. First, innovation and technology enhances student learning in mathematics. The mathematics department records lessons and posts on the internet. As a result, students are able to view lessons at home while doing homework or within class to review topics. In the first semester of posting videos, over 550 videos were reviewed by students and parents. Parents and students have noted the positive impact of the videos to deepening understanding of the mathematics concepts. Second, Robert Frost has a free after-school program, including transportation, to support mathematics and reading for students within ten points of passing the state assessment. A second after

school program is available for our neediest students. These students receive intensive instruction in small groups targeted to their areas of improvement. Additionally, we have developed MSA workbooks based on the specific areas of student needs.

Another innovative program targeting students performing at a basic level on the state assessment connects students with a teacher mentor. The mentor loops with the students throughout the middle school years, and we propose to continue through the first year of high school. Program highlights include field trips to the University of Maryland and a technology-based high school. As a result of these targeted interventions, the goal is to increase performance not only on the state assessments, but to increase levels of student engagement and eliminate achievement gaps.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Robert Frost Middle School is continually one of the highest performing schools as measured by the Maryland School Assessment. The principal praises the staff each year for this accomplishment but continually challenges the staff to focus on supporting those students not yet achieving at a high level. Testing data is analyzed by the faculty as well as in individual teams. Students in need of additional support are listed on an all school accessible chart. This page contains detailed information of the student's test scores, attendance information, and a breakdown of areas of academic need. Teachers use the information to modify instruction as well as place the student in after-school and in-school support classes.

Each department is responsible for analyzing student test scores in their respective subjects and determining where re-teaching and reassessment is necessary for students to master course objectives. Instruction is redesigned and a determination is made as to whether this can be delivered in a class or individual manner. Subject-alike teachers meet on a continual basis to analyze formative and summative test scores to determine if individual teachers need to modify their instruction. Peer feedback and observations lead to academic excellence in each class.

Math teachers monitor students' readiness for Algebra 1 by 8th grade using a database designed to monitor MSA scores from grades 5 and 6, specific pre-algebra skills from Unit 2 of the Math 7 curriculum that we have correlated to success in Algebra 1, grades from marking period 1 and 2 from the student's current year and grades from marking periods 3 and 4 from the student's previous year. Furthermore, we use the Achievement Series reports to not only monitor how students are doing in a class or how they are doing on specific skills but also to evaluate ourselves as teachers. If our students' results are low in a given area we further evaluate our instructional methods to determine areas to improve.

English teachers monitor students' reading progress through multiple administrations of the MAP-R, a nationally-normed reading assessment. From disaggregated data, teachers identify areas of improvement. The test is administered beginning in grade three; therefore, teachers have access to trend data which informs instructional decisions. Students are partners in analyzing their individual data to create personal goals which are monitored through student portfolio data analysis sheets.

The achievement reports are also used to inform parents of student progress and performance. Additionally, students are recognized on a continuous basis. Approximately fifty students are recognized for the student of the month. Their portraits are prominently displayed in the school's front lobby. Assessment results are also used to recognize students during our quarterly honor roll and achievement celebrations. Finally, school achievement is shared with the community when we ask local businesses and organizations to join the Support Our Staff program. The Support Our Staff program provides door prizes for staff during our faculty meetings.

## **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Robert Frost Middle School embraces the concept of professional learning communities within and beyond the school. When we share, we learn. For example, a math teacher developed instructional YouTube videos to increase student learning. He includes QR (quick response) codes on homework and study guides. This allows access via a cell phone or handheld device and for anyone on the planet, with access to a computer. Students who are absent benefit from this use of technology. Students can review and learn from the video lessons at their own pace and time. This innovative use of technology is being shared with colleagues and others in the county.

Principal/parent breakfasts provide an opportunity to share pertinent information with parents. Team and department leaders present a session on what parents need to know to support the success of middle school students. An admissions officer from the University of Maryland shares strategies for preparing children for college. The principal shares visionary plans. It is standing room only at these events. Parents can network, acquire information, and get connected.

Our science teachers and Arts resource teacher have developed curriculum (STEM, astronomy, etc.) for the school system, impacting over 30,000 middle school students and staff. The Arts resource teacher developed a Super Team Handbook (resource booklet for 8<sup>th</sup> graders) to promote a seamless transition from middle school to high school. This handbook has been considered for adoption for all 38 middle schools. The Super Team program has been vital in improving our student eligibility rate upon entering high school to 97%.

Given our system-wide structure of cluster schools, principals and administrators share best practices and collaborate on a monthly basis. We share data, participate in professional development, and collaboratively solve problems. For example, Frost MS principal shared a team-building activity with the other 37 middle school principals. The focus was identifying and developing teacher leaders. Consequently, the activity was shared with leadership teams throughout the county.

Teachers regularly serve in a supervisory role for student teachers from local universities including University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University, Towson University, Hood College, McDaniel College, and Montgomery College. They impart their expertise and experience to help prepare the next generation of teacher leaders. Veteran teachers also serve as mentors for new teachers. This is critical for teacher development and retention. Our counselor supports the new secondary counselors and helps plan the county-wide counselor resource meetings, impacting over 110 counselors.

#### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

One of Robert Frost Middle School's core values found in each student handbook and every classroom is "Success is everyone's responsibility." We purposefully seek to establish strong relationships by actively engaging parents, students and community to promote the success of all.

Successful strategies in working with family and community members for student achievement and school improvement are the principal/parent breakfast meetings, the PTA newsletter, and parent team meetings. The principal has intentionally created and fostered a school environment that is inviting and transparent. His open door policy affords parents the opportunity to provide feedback and to share creative ideas that enhance student experiences. The vision of "Experience Excellence" is a part of the school culture and an expectation for staff.

The principal/parent breakfasts are held quarterly and provide an opportunity for the principal to informally connect with parents. Parent feedback is used to determine topics of interest. During these meetings, the principal shares school data and the school's vision for the year. Staff facilitates panel discussions that provide parents with strategies to help their children transition and thrive in middle school. Meetings also involve participation from the wider community, including the University of

Maryland. Each year, the university's admissions officer provides strategies that help parents prepare their middle school children for college. This topic is extremely engaging and well attended.

The Frost PTA produces monthly newsletters that keep parents informed of school events and student achievements. Also, the counseling department provides parents and students with strategies to support social, emotional and academic growth.

The common planning time of the interdisciplinary teams allows the opportunity for parents to meet with all of their child's teachers in one setting. Parents can hear and discuss what is working well to support their child's achievement. Also, they can share their perspectives and concerns. This forum promotes clear communication and a collaborative approach to meeting the student needs.

Numerous other programs and events unite Frost with its community. The annual International Night attracts families to experience the foods, music, and culture of many countries represented by the Frost student body. Additionally, the Academic Arts Fair showcases many types of student art and academic achievement to give parents a window on the learning taking place.

These and other strategies foster positive relationships between home and school. Consequently, our parents are more than willing to volunteer the time, talent, and resources that enrich the Frost learning experience.

# **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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## **1. Curriculum:**

Frost's instructional program reflects Maryland Common Core Standards and MCPS's ultimate goal to prepare all students for a competitive global society. Embedded in our curriculum, students earn 30 of the 75 student service learning hours required for high school graduation. We offer special education instruction. Students are placed in general education classes to provide the least restrictive environment. The English for Speakers of Other Languages program offers rich instruction at three levels to help students acquire the language and culture.

The mathematics program is based on the Maryland Mathematics Voluntary State Curriculum while integrating the eight Standards for Mathematical Practices. Students learn skills including proportional reasoning, data analysis, probability, algebraic relationships, measurement, problem solving skills, etc. We supplement the curriculum with teacher-developed challenge questions and tasks.

In science, students use a hands-on inquiry method to construct their learning of scientific principles. All students are placed in an advanced science class where problem-based learning supports the New Generation Science Standards. Each grade-level program is STEM-based and uses 21<sup>st</sup> Century tools to prepare students for success on the MSA as well as high school and college. Students experience rich instruction in ecology, physics, and chemistry. Chesapeake Bay excursions enhance the students' learning. Frost is one of the first schools in the county to have an entire grade level extract DNA.

World Languages courses support the Maryland Common Core standards. Students engage in the National Standards in World Languages that lends itself to creative and critical thinking, and academic success that Curriculum 2.0 has recently implemented. French, Spanish, and Chinese are offered at all grade levels.

Creative and critical thinking is the hallmark of the English curriculum. Re-teaching and reassessing core skills in reading, writing and language offers recursive opportunities for students to develop the skills they need for college and career readiness. All grade levels analyze a variety of literary texts to become critical readers and effective writers. Diversity in literary choices at each grade level reflects the diversity of our classrooms.

Social Studies instruction is designed to create historically literate and well-informed citizens who understand the responsibilities of a democratic society so that they can actively participate in it. Students conduct research and critically read and write in response to primary and secondary historical sources. They design and build digital media presentation models. An 8<sup>th</sup> grade Simulated Congressional Hearing is judged by elected leaders and members of the community. Students advocate for a topic of interest by writing to elected officials and creators of public policy.

Frost offers a robust and well-lauded Arts program, including visual arts, performing arts, family and consumer science, and technology courses, with 91% of the student population enrolled in at least one Arts elective. Students showcase their skills and talents in real world settings, developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and an understanding of human innovation.

Health and physical education is an integral part of the total education of every student. Our program strives to increase physical competence, skillfulness, health-related fitness, personal and social responsibility and the enjoyment of physical activity for all students. All students receive comprehensive health education for nine weeks. Students learn about mental health, harmful drugs, personal and consumer health, safety and injury prevention, family life and human sexuality, disease prevention, and nutrition.

The technology curricula implements state standards defined in the *Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students*. Each technology course introduces various operations, applications and concepts in technology literacy which is critical in our rapidly changing digital age. We offer a high school credit course that prepares students to become certified as Microsoft Office specialists in Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point and Access.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Language Arts teachers focus on providing rigorous, engaging instruction in reading, writing and language that prepares all students for a challenging high school program while meeting the goals of the MCPS curriculum and the Maryland Common Core Standards. English and required 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading classes are designated on-level or advanced, and special education students are placed in classes supported by a special education teacher or in advanced classes with consultative support. We believe that with support, all students can achieve at an advanced level and that all students can learn to think critically and write academically. Students are exposed to a wide variety of literature representing diverse cultures and a range of difficulty that allows them to analyze, identify patterns in professional writing, and evaluate historical and contemporary political speeches. Teachers routinely write with students and offer models of their own writing as they mentor students through the writing process. Students write recursively throughout the year to hone skills in narration, exposition and persuasion. Non-evaluative journaling offers students a venue for self-expression. Each grade builds on the use of technology for research and presentation. Daily feedback, rubrics, portfolio review, re-teaching and reassessing offers students ample opportunities for improvement. Students are partners in maintaining data-analysis records in their English portfolios.

Students participate in writing competitions and the National Spelling Bee. Students attend the American Film Institute to strengthen understanding of the visual arts. As a culminating activity, students perform Shakespeare plays in a costumed, staged celebration of all the skills they practiced throughout the year.

One of the MCPS Keys to College Readiness is advanced reading performance on the MSA. We offer numerous supports to meet that goal. Reading classes prepare students for a world of increasingly complex text. Frost offers the *Reading Advantage* program which supports differentiated instruction at all levels. Frost offers Developmental Reading 7 and 8 for students identified on the MSA as needing reading support. Class size is limited to 12-15 which allows for direct, specialized instruction. Also, the Reading Specialist provides for 1:1 instruction. For students who require more intense remediation, Frost offers READ 180 and the REWARDS reading program. READ 180 is a computer-based, highly motivating reading program designed for students who read two or more years below grade level. REWARDS serves those students who demonstrate a need for phonics instruction. Additionally, we offer a remediation program for students who need further attention and support.

## **3. Mathematics:**

We strive for all students to be successful and have a love of math. We engage our students with a variety of instructional strategies (differentiation, interactive whiteboards, peer instruction, manipulatives, etc.) which enables them to learn at high levels. Our students are active participants in the classroom. We believe that the more time students spend out of their seats, participate in student discourse, and stay engaged in meaningful and focused lessons, the more they will become motivated learners who take pride and ownership of their mathematics education. We strive to achieve at least 80% enrollment in Algebra 1. Over the past five years, 80.4% of our students have achieved that goal. Of these students, 99.7% have passed the Maryland High School Assessment, and 99.3% successfully achieved Algebra 1 credit. Students are offered courses in Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1/Data Analysis and Honors Geometry.

Students who need a challenging accelerated curriculum can take Investigations into Mathematics in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Algebra 1/Data Analysis in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Honors Geometry in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The Algebra 1/Data Analysis and Honors Geometry curricula carry high school credit, with the Honors Geometry

credit being weighted. Thus, students who are accelerated could earn two of the four high school credits necessary for graduation. Additionally, students who desire a competitive arena can participate on Math Team, Math League, Carderock Naval Surface Warfare Center or Algebra Jeopardy.

For the students who have difficulty acquiring various math skills we have developed an extensive list of supports for success. We offer a double period algebra course that is built into the student's school day schedule. We also have after school algebra tutoring and daily lunch tutoring, both taught by algebra teachers.

Additional supports include:

- Math Matters Club (peer tutoring that meets once a week: accelerated 8<sup>th</sup> graders work with 6<sup>th</sup> graders who are in on level classes)
- After School Extended Day Intervention Program (focuses on skills from on level courses for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders who were basic on the MSA),
- MSA All-Stars (Test taking and study skills for students within 10 points of achieving the next performance level on the MSA)
- Wings of Eagles Program (Specific instruction for students who were only 10 points from the proficient level on the MSA)
- SOAR (Additional support for re-teaching, make up work for absences, and to re-assess quizzes)

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

The instrumental music curriculum at Robert Frost Middle Schools provides students with opportunities to perform in various authentic performance settings. Through these performances, students focus on mastering individual skills required to become literate musicians as well as proficiency on their instrument. The curriculum is aligned with the Maryland State Standards for instrumental music as well as the National Standards for Music Education.

Robert Frost's instrumental music program is comprised of seven performance ensembles: jazz band, sixth grade strings, concert orchestra, chamber orchestra, sixth grade band, concert band, and advanced band. Serving over 250 students, high quality instruction occurs daily as students work towards the long term goal of becoming independent musicians focused on utilizing the critical thinking skills needed to not only demonstrate individual proficiency but to perform as an ensemble. Through the performance of increasingly difficult repertoire, students apply music literacy skills, playing technique, and ensemble skills to deliver a high quality performance. The sixth grade ensembles focus on building a strong foundation and perform live twice a year through the careful study of easy intermediate music. As the concert level ensembles begin to refine their performance skills and become more independent musicians, they will join with the advanced level ensembles to compete in national competitions. The top ensembles perform at an advanced middle school, early high school difficulty level. The Robert Frost instrumental music ensembles have participated in music festivals and competitions in Toronto, Chicago, Atlanta, Boston, New York, and Pennsylvania earning the top ranking every year since 1990. Each year, the jazz band is asked to perform two concerts at the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. Such an honor is a testament to our rigorous curriculum and quality instruction.

It is at Frost where many students discover their passion for music and embark upon a lifelong commitment to their craft. Robert Frost has molded young musicians who have moved on to earn degrees in music performance, music education, conducting, and composition from notable colleges and universities such as Oberlin College, Hofstra University, Eastman School of Music, Indiana University,

and DePaul University. Frost alumni have pursued careers as a senior percussionist in the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps and as a conductor on Broadway.

## **5. Instructional Methods:**

Robert Frost Middle School fosters classrooms rich in student engagement. The growing awareness of the importance of educational engagement for learning and academic achievement is the driving force in our *School Improvement Plan*. Therefore, the focus is to build the capacity of our teachers to be engaged and engaging in order to enhance student achievement and success in school. This focus requires that the teachers plan and deliver lessons that invite all students to regularly analyze, synthesize, problem solve and collaborate.

In addition to daily instruction, students are provided weekly opportunities to meet with individual teachers to seek further assistance or receive extensions on material they have already mastered. This time, called SOAR (Student Opportunities for Achievement and Relationship-building) meets the needs of the learners. For some students, it provides one-on-one time with specific teachers, while for others, SOAR provides an opportunity to work in small groups or individually with teachers to gain a deeper understanding of concepts. Students self-select teachers they visit during each SOAR, which also nurtures student independence and decision-making.

Technology is incorporated into instruction on a daily basis throughout the school. Most of the classrooms have interactive whiteboards (IWB), and all classrooms have computers for student use. Additionally, several mathematics teachers use the IWB to record tutorials for students to use while they are completing homework at home or while they are reviewing material within the classroom. *YouTube* is a leisure activity for students; therefore, the mathematics department incorporates educationally relevant information in a venue for the learners of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. These lessons are easily accessed via the internet, and students report that the videos assist in helping them learn and understand mathematical concepts. In science, teachers use a program whereby the lesson of the day can be delivered by a substitute with a virtual teacher. The substitute manipulates the IWB as the teacher delivers a prerecorded lesson. The students participate in the session as though the teacher were there. We also use an electronic communication system called *Edline* to communicate with students and parents. This program enables teachers to communicate post instructionally relevant information including assignments, study guides, class news, and long term calendars. Furthermore, students and families use *Edline* to access grades. As a result of the seamless use of technology, students and families have access to the instructional program as well as grading and reporting.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Robert Frost Middle School celebrates high-quality professional development, with staff members working collaboratively to refine and expand practices that improve learning for all students. We align our professional development with the MCPS Professional Growth System (PGS) which is a specific goal in MCPS's strategic plan, *A Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*. It focuses on “evaluation plans with six professional standards, job-embedded professional development, and professional development plans.”

Our staff development teacher collaborates with teachers to monitor their evaluation plans to meet the six professional growth standards. Veteran teachers mentor first year teachers by helping them critique best practices and reflect on teaching experiences. Our job-embedded professional development includes grade level and content area professional learning communities whose goals are aligned with system-wide curricula and state standards. Activities within these communities include weekly meetings to discuss best practices, modeling effective teaching strategies, and sharing instructional resources. Staff members participate in book studies allowing for a deeper understanding of teaching/learning. Books such as *The Global Achievement Gap* by Tony Wagner; *Leaders of Learning* by Richard Dufour and Robert Marzano; and *How Children Succeed* by Paul Tough spark professional conversation, promote programming

changes and allow for rich discussion around equity, student achievement and the benefits of professional learning communities.

Staff members participate in MCPS professional meetings, cohorts, and training sessions to learn system-wide goals such as increasing student engagement in the classroom, meeting the needs of the 21st Century learner and teaching of critical thinking skills. As a result of professional development, several teachers currently use online forums that enhance student learning outside the classroom. Teachers develop and pilot new curriculum and create collections of thematically related materials to share with their colleagues. Additionally, we conduct peer visits and classroom walkthroughs to enhance learning. A focus on the impact of race and equity is reflected in equitable practices and differentiated instruction. Seven Frost teachers achieved National Board Certification and many obtained and/or are working on advanced degrees. This allows our staff to engage in continuous dialogue regarding teaching practices and educational trends.

Teachers implement professional development plans that directly relate to MCPS goals and our School Improvement Plan. We analyze student achievement data through activities such as study groups, committee participation, data chats, and team teaching and planning.

At Frost, we believe professional development is not a “one-size-fits-all” approach, but an ongoing process that continuously improves our teaching standards and student achievement.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Transformational! This best describes the leadership approach at Frost Middle School. There is an unswerving commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. For example, the articulation process is constantly reviewed and revised. Collaboration, data review, stakeholder input, and debate led to thoughtful risks. Last year, 103 students were accelerated beyond their recommended courses. Student self-confidence and performance improved, dramatically. Given support and high expectations, ninety-eight percent earned an “A” or “B” in their advanced course.

Meeting weekly, the administrative team consists of the principal, two assistant principals, and one assistant school administrator. Principal roles include visionary, chief of school culture/climate, and educational leader. Each assistant serves as a grade-level administrator for approximately 380 students. They guide their students for three years. This system of looping allows for relationship building and efficient delivery of services for over 1140 students. Administrative responsibilities (testing, safety/security, master scheduling, etc.) are rotated annually and biennially to provide breadth and depth of leadership. Shared decision making is common practice. For example, decisions regarding discipline are made collaboratively among at least two administrators.

The instructional leadership team (ILT) functions as a professional learning community (PLC). The ILT/PLC meets weekly to address school-wide items that impact teaching/learning and student achievement. The 22-member ILT/PLC (administration, team & department leaders, support staff, instructional data assistant, media specialist, staff representative, resource counselor, and accelerated and enriched instruction specialist teacher) is accountable to the school at-large and each other. Stakeholder input is always welcomed. For example, students and parents expressed an interest in the use of e-readers (kindle, nook, etc.). ILT/PLC members researched pros and cons. Discussion ensued. Consequently, an e-reader policy was developed that enriched our Now Reading program and met student and staff needs.

Team leaders function within interdisciplinary teams. During common planning periods, they address day-to-day operations and focus on teaching/learning for high student achievement, for all. Autonomy and professionalism are practiced in allocating material and human resources to meet diverse student needs. Department chairs focus on system-wide initiatives and content-specific issues that impact curriculum. Additionally, the operations team (front office staff, building services, security, financial assistant, administration, technology, etc.) meets weekly to review the school wide calendar and

upcoming events. This promotes a smooth, productive school day with minimal interruptions to instructional time. Finally, Student Government Association is an important part of school leadership. They expressed a need for more physical activity and the popular Now Walking was birthed.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year:

Publisher:

2012/2011/2010/2009/2008

Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	96	98	94	95	94
Advanced	64	69	58	52	60
Number of students tested	356	353	368	345	386
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	73	83	75	74	58
Advanced	20	22	15	5	21
Number of students tested	15	23	20	18	15
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	83	79	74	86	68
Advanced	35	26	21	5	32
Number of students tested	23	19	15	21	10
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	89	94	88	68	78
Advanced	37	39	29	32	35
Number of students tested	19	31	22	19	31
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	82		62	59	64
Advanced	19	30	10	9	18
Number of students tested	27	30	23	28	30
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient		83	Masked	Masked	100
Advanced		30	Masked	Masked	50
Number of students tested			6	9	12
<b>6. Code 504</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	100		85	Masked	
Advanced	40	72	54	Masked	
Number of students tested	10	11	13	5	
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. An empty box indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in the category, or indicates the percentage for the category is either greater than/ equal to 95 or less than/equal to 5 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.					

13MD4

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year:

Publisher:

2012/2011/2010/2009/2008

Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	98	98	97	97	97
Advanced	77	74	77	75	78
Number of students tested	356	353	369	346	386
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	67	83	90	84	84
Advanced	33	30	45	32	47
Number of students tested	15	23	20	19	19
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	83	84	84	91	90
Advanced	48	26	63	41	47
Number of students tested	23	19	17	23	11
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	95	90	100	74	83
Advanced	53	52	56	37	49
Number of students tested	19	31	21	21	30
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	85	90	79	78	74
Advanced	30	47	24	19	32
Number of students tested	27	30	26	32	34
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced		86	Masked	Masked	92
Advanced		30	Masked	Masked	42
Number of students tested			7	9	12
<b>6. Code 504</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	100		100	Masked	
Advanced	60	73	85	Masked	
Number of students tested	10	11	13	5	
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
An empty box indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in the category, or indicates the percentage for the category is either greater than/ equal to 95 or less than/equal to 5 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.					

13MD4

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year:

Publisher:

2012/2011/2010/2009/2008

Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	95	94	92	93	96
Advanced	59	53	46	53	55
Number of students tested	372	382	379	411	400
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	63	56	75	67	71
Advanced	25	6	6	14	29
Number of students tested	16	16	16	21	21
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	95	65	70	70	63
Advanced				20	21
Number of students tested	23	17	20	20	19
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	91	88	72	74	92
Advanced	30	21	6	11	19
Number of students tested	33	24	18	27	21
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	89	73	52	62	84
Advanced	29		3	6	10
Number of students tested	28	30	31	34	34
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient			Masked	Masked	82
Advanced			Masked	Masked	36
Number of students tested			8	5	11
<b>6. Code 504</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	91	93	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	55	53	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	11	15	8	7	7
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
An empty box indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in the category, or indicates the percentage for the category is either greater than/ equal to 95 or less than/equal to 5 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.					

13MD4

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year:

Publisher:

2012/2011/2010/2009/2008

Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	99	97	96	98	98
Advanced	81	78	79	72	82
Number of students tested	372	382	379	410	400
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	94	94	75	95	91
Advanced	56	44	38	48	57
Number of students tested	16	16	16	21	21
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	87	94	85	95	84
Advanced	48	47	40	40	53
Number of students tested	16	17	20	20	19
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	97		78	93	95
Advanced	61	68	44	48	52
Number of students tested	33	24	18	27	21
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	93	67	58	85	87
Advanced	46	13	23	12	45
Number of students tested	28	30	31	34	31
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced			Masked		73
Advanced			Masked		46
Number of students tested			8		11
<b>6. Code 504</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	100	93	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	82	73	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	11	15	8	7	7
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
An empty box indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in the category, or indicates the percentage for the category is either greater than/ equal to 95 or less than/equal to 5 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.					

13MD4

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year:

Publisher:

2012/2011/2010/2009/2008

Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	93	91	91	93	90
Advanced	74	72	71	69	67
Number of students tested	405	390	434	412	371
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	45	68	54	63	67
Advanced	17	21	31	42	20
Number of students tested	18	24	26	24	15
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	56	68	46	63	42
Advanced	22	32	23	37	33
Number of students tested	18	22	26	19	12
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	81	65	86	86	88
Advanced	41	26	59	32	36
Number of students tested	27	23	29	22	25
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	66	27	53	53	52
Advanced	23	15	18	13	14
Number of students tested	31	33	34	32	29
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient				60	82
Advanced				40	46
Number of students tested				10	11
<b>6. Code 504</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	94		90	Masked	
Advanced	67		50	Masked	
Number of students tested	18		10	8	
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
An empty box indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in the category, or indicates the percentage for the category is either greater than/ equal to 95 or less than/equal to 5 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.					

13MD4

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year:

Publisher:

2012/2011/2010/2009/2008

Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	97	96	97	96	95
Advanced	75	80	72	67	71
Number of students tested	404	390	433	411	371
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	83	88	85	83	80
Advanced	33	46	31	33	33
Number of students tested	18	24	26	24	15
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	78	91	89	79	83
Advanced	50	41	31	42	33
Number of students tested	18	22	26	19	12
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	93	78	90	91	88
Advanced	48	44	69	36	36
Number of students tested	27	22	29	22	25
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	78	64	79	69	62
Advanced	19	27	29	34	17
Number of students tested	31	33	34	32	29
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Advanced & Proficient				Masked	
Advanced				Masked	10
Number of students tested				9	10
<b>6. Code 504</b>					
Advanced & Proficient	94		90	Masked	
Advanced	72		40	Masked	
Number of students tested	18		10	8	
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
An empty box indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in the category, or indicates the percentage for the category is either greater than/ equal to 95 or less than/equal to 5 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.					

13MD4